

**Notice of Allowability**

Application No.

10/726,682

Examiner

Thoi V. Duong

Applicant(s)

MIZUTANI ET AL.

Art Unit

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**-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--**

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the amendment filed October 06, 2006.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) ~~is/are~~ 1, 5, 7, 9, 11, 12 and 14-17.
3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
  - a) ☒ All    b) ☐ Some\*    c) ☐ None    of the:
    1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
    2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
    3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* Certified copies not received: \_\_\_\_\_.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

**THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.**

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
  5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS ( as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
    - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review ( PTO-948) attached
      - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
    - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

**Attachment(s)**

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|--|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application                      |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                       | 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),<br>Paper No./Mail Date _____. |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),<br>Paper No./Mail Date _____    | 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment                               |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit<br>of Biological Material | 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance   |
|  | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____.   |

## DETAILED ACTION

### ***Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114***

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after allowance or after an Office action under *Ex Parte Quayle*, 25 USPQ 74, 453 O.G. 213 (Comm'r Pat. 1935). Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, prosecution in this application has been reopened pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on October 06, 2006 has been entered.

Accordingly, claims 15-17 were added, and claims 2-4, 6, 8, 10 and 13 were cancelled. Currently, claims 1, 5, 7, 9, 11, 12 and 14-17 are pending in this application.

### ***Allowable Subject Matter***

2. Claims 1, 5, 7, 9, 11, 12 and 14-17 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: none of the prior art of record fairly suggests or shows all of the limitations as claimed. Specifically,

Re claims 1, 5, 9 and 15-17, none of the prior art of record discloses, in combination with other limitations as claimed, a spread illuminating apparatus for illuminating two objects, the apparatus comprising:

at least one light source;

a light conductive plate having the at least one light source provided at one end surface thereof and adapted to allow light emitted from the at least one light source and introduced therein to exit out therefrom through two major surfaces thereof respectively

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toward a first liquid crystal display element which constitutes one of two objects to be illuminated, and which is disposed over one of the two major surfaces of the light conductive plate, and toward a second liquid crystal display element which constitutes the other of the two objects to be illuminated, has a smaller display screen size than the first liquid crystal display element, and which is partially disposed over the other of the two major surfaces of the light conductive plate, the second liquid crystal display element covering one area, but not covering another area, of the other of the two major surfaces of the light conductive plate; and

a reflector plate, reflecting light toward the first liquid crystal display element, partially disposed at the other major surface of the light conductive plate having the second liquid crystal display element, the reflector plate covering an area of the other of the two major surfaces that is not covered by the second liquid crystal display element, the reflector plate not covering an area of the other of the two major surfaces that is covered by the second liquid crystal display element,

wherein the reflector plate has a reflectance that matches with a reflectance of the second liquid crystal display element as recited in claims 1, 5 and 9;

or

wherein the reflector plate has an area facing the light conductive plate and only partially formed at an end area close to a boundary formed between the second liquid crystal display element and the reflector plate, so that the reflectance of the reflector plate gradually decreases according to a distance from the second liquid crystal display element in the area, and wherein the area partially formed on the reflector plate is

provided without overlapping any parts of the second liquid crystal display element relative to a back surface of the light conductive plate as recited in claims 15-17.

The most relevant reference, US 6,679,613 B2 to Mabuchi, fails to disclose or suggest the claimed invention. As shown in Fig. 4, Mabuchi discloses a surface light source device comprising a light conductive plate 16, a display element 22 disposed over the upper surface of the light conductive plate 16, a liquid crystal display element 20 partially disposed over the lower surface of the light conductive plate 16, and a reflector plate 18, reflecting light toward the display element 22, partially disposed at the bottom surface of the light conductive plate 16 having the liquid crystal display element 20, the reflector plate 18 covering an area of the bottom surface that is not covered by the liquid crystal display element 20, the reflector plate not covering an area of the bottom surface that is covered by the liquid crystal display element 20. However, Mabuchi does not suggest that the reflector plate 18 has a reflectance that matches with a reflectance of the liquid crystal display element 20, or the reflector plate 18 has an area facing the light conductive plate 16 and only partially formed at an end area close to a boundary formed between the second liquid crystal display element 20 and the reflector plate 18, so that the reflectance of the reflector plate gradually decreases according to a distance from the second liquid crystal display element 20 in the area.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

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**Conclusion**

3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thoi V. Duong whose telephone number is (571) 272-2292. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Nelms, can be reached at (571) 272-1787.

Thoi V. Duong



03/10/2007